



Cities for Everyone

Cities for Everyone supports more affordable housing and transportation, in order to provide security, mobility and opportunity for people with all incomes and abilities

www.citiesforeveryone.org

Municipal Candidates Affordability Survey

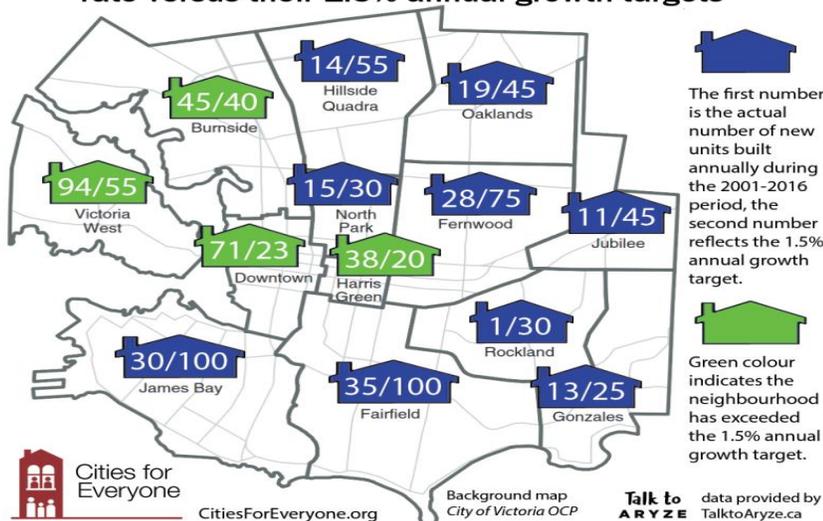
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For more information see the [Victoria Affordability Backgrounder](#) and other documents at www.citiesforeveryone.org.

Context	Questions	Comments
Our region is considered unaffordable, based on income-to-cost ratios (households spending no more than 45% of income on housing and transport), and low rental vacancy rates.	1. What priority do you give to local efforts to increase affordability? Low ___ Medium ___ High X	As a renter with roommates I am well aware of the affordability struggles facing many people in this city.
Many middle-income households (\$40-80k per year) spend more on housing and transport than is affordable, and so want more middle-priced (\$1,200-2,500 per month) housing in walkable urban neighbourhoods.	2. Do you support efforts to increase middle- as well as lower-income affordability? Yes X No ___ Maybe ___	Actively encouraging "Missing Middle" development is key to increasing the number of more affordable homes.
Our urban population grows approximately 1.5% annually. Although housing supply currently grows at about that rate, most new units are downtown or at the urban fringe. The <i>1.5% Neighbourhood Affordability Solution</i> (see below) sets neighbourhood infill targets.	3. Do you support the <i>1.5% Solution</i> neighbourhood housing growth targets? Yes ___ No ___ Maybe X	Equity of development and density increases should be encouraged and at the front of mind for councillors. The 1.5% Solution works as a guiding principle rather than mandated policy.

Neighbourhoods' actual annual housing growth rate versus their 1.5% annual growth targets



Cities for Everyone's [1.5% Neighbourhood Affordability Solution](#) sets targets to increase neighbourhoods' housing supply by approximately 1.5% annually, to match the City's population growth rate.

Most of this housing should be middle-priced (\$1,200-2,500 per month), so it is initially affordable to middle-income households, and becomes affordable to lower-income households as it depreciates in the future.

This ensures that more lower- and middle-income households can afford suitable housing in walkable urban neighbourhoods.

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<p>Most residential neighbourhoods only allow two stories and limit densities, which excludes most <i>missing middle</i> housing (see below). Affordable housing requires upzoning.</p>	<p>4. Do you support upzoning:</p> <p>Neighbourhood-wide _____</p> <p>For all corner and larger lots _____</p> <p>Only on a case-by-case basis _____</p>	<p>Victoria has 687 zoning codes. Vancouver has less than 100. Rather than generic support of upzoning, I believe we need across the board zoning reform to give homeowners and developers stability and reasonable expectations.</p>
		<p>The “missing middle” includes moderate density housing types such as multiplexes, townhomes and low-rise apartments. These are generally the least costly houses to develop.</p>
<p>Many jurisdictions have <i>inclusionary</i> mandates which require that a portion (typically 5-15%) of new units be priced below market rates. However, if this requirement is excessive it can reduce the number of new units built.</p>	<p>5. Do you support mandates:</p> <p>For all new housing _____</p> <p>For higher-priced housing _____</p> <p>Only on a case-by-case basis <u> X </u></p> <p>Under no circumstances _____</p>	<p>This is definitely appropriate on a case-by-case basis, not a blanket approach by any means.</p>
<p>Urban parking typically costs \$10-60k per space, and an increasing portion of households are car-free. For affordability and fairness sake many experts recommend reducing parking requirements so occupants are not forced to pay for costly spaces they do not need.</p>	<p>6. Do you support reduced parking requirements for infill developments even if some neighbours object?</p> <p>Yes __ No __ Maybe <u> X </u></p>	<p>I would not support this as a blanket approach either. Proximity to amenities and downtown is a significant factor in parking needs. That said, a 1:1 parking to unit ratio is no longer common practice.</p>
<p>Infill development often requires variances to allow taller buildings, higher densities and fewer parking spaces than codes require. Neighbors often oppose these variances.</p>	<p>7. Would you approve variances needed for medium-priced infill?</p> <p>Generally approve _____</p> <p>Generally reject _____</p> <p>Approve dependent on OCP & Consultation <u> X </u></p>	<p>This is entirely dependent on the development in question and much of this would be solved with the full-scale zoning reform I advocate for.</p>
<p>Victoria’s <i>Official Community Plan</i> generally allows up to two stories in <i>traditional residential</i> neighbourhoods, three stories on <i>collector streets</i>, four stories in <i>urban villages</i>, and six stories on <i>major arterials</i>, but some residents consider these too tall and dense.</p>	<p>8. If a proposed development meets OCP guidelines and includes moderate-priced units (less than \$600k), but is opposed by some neighbors, would you:</p> <p>Reject it _____</p> <p>Approve it _____</p> <p>Approve if supported by community <u> X </u></p>	<p>Generally in favour of this. In my experience, development hearings at council are often dominated by the negative side. However, if you look at written submissions there tends to be more in favour than against. We should move to allow video submissions (private or via social media) to increase public input on these decisions.</p>

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	<p>9. What other municipal affordability strategies do you support?</p>	<p>Affordability is on most people's minds this election, but it means something different to nearly everyone I speak with. To some, it's the lack of affordable housing. To others it is the lack of affordable transit, or rental availability, or even the high cost of goods and gas. As someone under the age of 30, and a renter as well, many of the affordability issues in this city impact me. Victoria needs to spend more time and resources listening and responding to these real affordability concerns of residents instead of spending tax dollars on unnecessary things such as musical parkade stairwells.</p> <p>Tackling the affordability crisis is something at the forefront of mind for many in my generation. I worked as the Director of Communications & Government Relations at the Trust for Sustainable Development and my years there working directly for David Butterfield taught me a great deal about development, sustainability, and urban planning. Municipal politicians deserve the majority of blame for the affordability crisis we now find ourselves in. Too many local politicians have been sitting at the decision-making table for decades, impeding progress by shooting down projects, scaling back proposals and delaying developments. This, along with catering to special interest groups and a vocal minority laid the groundwork for today's housing crisis.</p> <p>The situation cannot be turned around overnight, but I believe there are several things that can be done at the municipal level to right the ship and start moving in a positive direction. Increasing supply and ensuring an appropriate stock of housing units and balance throughout the full spectrum of housing options is absolutely vital. This can be achieved through gentle density increases, focusing on addressing the lack of so-called "Missing Middle" or multi-unit/clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family dwellings. A two-storey townhouse on a single lot doesn't alter the character of a neighbourhood but still contributes to a density increase.</p> <p>See Answer to #10 for my thoughts on zoning reform, another thing we can do to help increase the supply side of housing and reduce the cost of housing. Once you have more predictability, development applications will take less time and that is less money sunk into any given project before shovels are even in the ground. Economic uncertainty plays a major factor in projects costs and unit pricing when permits and approvals take over a year to process. According to a recent report by the C.D. Howe Institute, fees, zoning regulations, and red tape have added \$264,000 to the price of a single-family home in Victoria between 2007 and 2016. Unsurprisingly, that cost is passed straight on to the consumer, thus raising home prices. While a municipal government cannot tackle things like interest rates which also significantly contribute to rising home prices, we can look to reduce some of these extra costs imposed upon builders for the betterment of both sides as well make sure that projects are denied or approved in a timely manner than respects all parties.</p>
	<p>10. Please let us know if you have other thoughts concerning our community's inaffordability problems and solutions?</p>	<p>One of the most ambitious things I believe the City should embark upon would be the process of zoning reform. We have 687 different zones created by council's constant spot zoning and disregard for neighbourhood plans and the Official Community Plan. In comparison to our city of 85,792 people, the City of Vancouver with 631,486 people has less than 100 zoning codes. This is the result of constant exceptions to the rules, deviations from the Official Community Plan (OCP), and seemingly endless exercises in spot-zoning from the council table. This is bad for homeowners as well as bad for builders. If we overhaul, modernize, and simplify zoning codes and bylaws that will provide predictability for everyone. Homeowners want to know that their intimate residential street won't suddenly have a six-storey condo building in the middle of the block while developers need to know what can be done with a property they are looking at purchasing. Let's give both homeowners and developers reasonable expectations and predictability about the future of our neighbourhoods with zoning reform.</p>